



Our motoring expert Tim Barnes-Clay takes to the track with the new supercharged version of the award winning Lotus Evora

# LOTUS EVORA S

**T**he renowned Norwich sports car manufacturer, Lotus, has gone one step further with its award winning Evora by adding a supercharger to the car's already very potent 3.5-litre V6 engine. That is why, if you were in any doubt, there is now a very subtle 'S' appearing on the rear of some of the East Anglian made cars.

The motor now delivers 345bhp, which is

a significant leap from the slightly laid-back 276bhp of the original model. Unsurprisingly, this extra 69bhp of grunt firmly places the Evora into high octane competition because it is now neck and neck with the Porsche 911 in terms of power, price and weight.

In many ways the Evora S is a natural progression from the initial version but I think it is an indication of what people can come

to expect from the next generation of Lotus cars. It retains core sports car values such as performance through lightweight materials but it also gives more than that - it blends top performance, style and comfort without cutting corners.

Standard kit on the S includes a close-ratio gearbox and a fantastic looking rear diffuser. Optional, are larger diamond-turned wheels



which are 19 inches at the front and a tractor-like 20 inches at the rear. My test car had these fitted and they do look the business, it has to be said.

Once inside, you soon realise that the S is just as dramatic as its gratifyingly styled exterior. You can have a 2+2 seating set up, but my test car had the 2+0 configuration, allowing for a decent rear storage area rather than a miniature rear bench. The front leather seats are very comfortable, and touch sensitive switchgear abound. The Evora S also comes with a sport pack as standard, featuring a 'sport' button which means that behind the wheel you can



control throttle response, and activate the exhaust by-pass valve. And when it comes to being practical, the boot is even big enough to fit in two sets of golf clubs.

Behind the wheel, the first thing I noticed

about the Evora S is how well it rides. The 3.5-litre V6 lump is tame in town, but it is hard to mask the heavy throaty rumble of the power waiting to be unleashed. Hit the open road and the Toyota sourced power-plant pins you to your seat. You soon realise that the car is utterly addictive to drive. Ok, the clutch is heavy and the gear shift is still not exactly ultra-smooth, but the S feels poles apart from the ordinary Evora. The ride is just that bit firmer, without being uncomfortable and the steering has a nicer weight to it.

As mentioned, the glorious Evora S has a bulging beast of a supercharger. It is on show in the tiny slit of a back window and looks like it is straining to get out. All that power-inducing technology suits the car well because there is none of the hoarse shriek that its 'charged' family member, the Exige, can be guilty of.

**"It blends top performance, style and comfort without cutting corners."**

Push the pedal to the metal and the direct throttle response leaves you feeling that there must be a larger engine in the back. It keeps surging forward - similar to that feeling of taking off in a plane - all the way to 7200rpm if you hit the magical and all-exhilarating 'sport' button. That gizmo, by the way, is a great toy because, as indicated earlier, it allows you to raise the instantaneous rev limit and change the dynamic stability control settings as well as alter the exhaust note. This results in a total experience transformation - so much so, that it is like having two cars in one body. Indeed, apart from the obvious power difference, the Evora S communicates with you more than the already very accomplished standard model. In many ways the driving experience is more



wholesome because the suspension setting has been fine tuned for the added clout and control so it responds even more accurately to direction.

To cope with all this extra brute force you need super-effective brakes, and I am glad to say Lotus does not disappoint, equipping the Evora S with cross-drilled brakes for improved cooling. Equally reassuring is how obedient the sports car is - even on cold or wet surfaces. Much of this has to be down to the DPM (Dynamic Performance Management) - Lotus's stability control, which is standard on the S and cleverly sorts out any waywardness.

If the supercharged Evora's understandable talent for turning heads and drivability is not enough, its combined cycle fuel economy

